



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS
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FOUNDER
Mrs. Sybil Brand

CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. Eleanor R. Montaña

VICE CHAIRPERSON
Mr. Frank S. Bacio

Ms. Barbara Bigby
Ms. Rita Hall
Mr. John A. Hammargren
Mr. Carl E. Moore

MINUTES OF THE SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING APRIL 15, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Montaña called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chair Montaña led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Chair Eleanor R. Montaña
Frank Bacio
Barbara Bigby
John A. Hammargren
Carl E. Moore

Excused Absence

Rita Hall

Others Present

Alan P. Henry, Community Care Licensing
Cesar Menchaca, Internal Services Department
Captain Warren Asmus, Sheriff's Department
Commander Margaret Ruiz, Sheriff's Department
Michael Varela, Probation Department
Barbara Butler, Department of Children and Family Services
Dorothy Channel, Department of Children and Family Services
Elizabeth Howard, Department of Children and Family Services

Staff

Janice Davis, Commission Services Staff

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Chair Montaña welcomed everyone in attendance and requested that Department Representatives introduce themselves.

Commissioner Bigby joined the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Community Care Licensing Division:

Mr. Alan P. Henry gave the following report:

- Michelle Travis Inc. Hobart (Los Angeles) – 38 #4 has officially closed as of 1/23/09.
- Zenith Group Home #I (Inglewood) – 64, #1, has officially closed as of 2/26/09.
- Zenith Group Home #III (Los Angeles) – 63, #4, has officially closed as of 3/25/09.

Internal Services Department:

Mr. Cesar Menchaca introduced himself and informed the Commission he is representing Mr. Michael Henderson.

Department of Mental Health: No representative was present.

Sheriff's Department:

Commander Margaret Ruiz distributed handouts and gave the following report for the period of February 14, 2009 – March 13, 2009:

- The grand total of inmate assaults on staff was 16.
- The total number of staff personnel injured was 7.
- The total number of inmates injured was 14.
- There was a total of zero (0) complaints by inmates regarding the use of force by deputy personnel.
- Sheriff's Department transportation is available to assist Probation Camps in an emergency evacuation when needed. The Probation Department is aware of this process.

Captain Asmus reported the following:

- Only minor issues will be repaired at the Long Beach Courthouse because the Courthouse will be torn down and replaced with a new Courthouse in the near future.

Department of Auditor-Controller: No representative was present.

Probation Department:

Mr. Michael Varela gave the following report:

- Mr. Michael Cooper, representative to the Sybil Brand Commission passed away.
- All needed repairs and cleaning at the Compton Courthouse will be corrected. The keys to the cuffing ports are not available because the ports were built to be used for adults only and not for juveniles.
- The Probation Department Policy states that in an emergency, the Department communicates with Transportation Headquarters to transport children to a local facility.
- A volunteer/mentor to two twin boys, decided to become their guardian, by mistake the Probation Department sent him a bill for taking care of the twins. The bill has since been retracted because the Department's focus is to reunite children with their family members.

Department of Children and Family Services:

Ms. Barbara Butler reported the following for the period of March 17, 2009 - April 14, 2009:

- The reported number of physical abuse allegations was 10.
- The reported number of sexual abuse allegations was 2.
- The reported number of general neglect allegations was 5.
- The reported number of runaways from group homes was 185.
- Because of the closure of multiple group homes, the goal of the Department is to reunite children with their families. Funds are being used for the "Wrap Around Program", this is a program that tracks the time frame a child is in a group home until the child is discharged to a family member and if the child returns to a group home.

Ms. Dorothy Channel reported on the following events:

- The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and the Probation Department, Casey Family Programs, The Teague Family Foundation, and United Friends of the Children is hosting "Celebration 09, Honoring the Academic Achievements of Foster Youths" to be held on June 4, 2009, at the Walt Disney Concert Hall.
- The "Los Angeles Department of Water and Power", is currently seeking juniors and graduating seniors to work full-time this summer. The work will be meaningful and a great learning experience that will encourage them to seek possible future opportunities with LADWP.

Chair Montañó and the Commissioners thanked the various Department Representatives for their participation and reports.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 8, 2009, MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Hammargren, seconded by Vice-Chair Bacio, and unanimously carried, the minutes of April 8, 2009, were approved with no changes.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Montañó reported on three (3) news articles:

- "New Studies Say Misuse of Foster-Care Funds Continue", Daily Breeze, April 14, 2009, regarding audits conducted that found private foster care agency officials enjoying lives of luxury at tax payer's expense.
- "ACLU Slams State of L.A. Jail", Daily Breeze, April 15, 2009, regarding a civil rights group calling for the closure of the downtown Men's Central Jail, alleging the Los Angeles County lockup is so overcrowded and brutal that it threatens the mental health of inmates.
- "ACLU Presses Sheriff to Close Men's Central Jail", April 15, 2009, regarding Civil rights advocates calling on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and Sheriff Lee Baca to close the Men's Central Jail, due to nightmarish conditions and overcrowding which undermines the inmates' mental health.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Commissioner Bacio reported that the current balance of the Commission's Charitable Fund is \$1,230.93.

CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIT REPORT

The San Gabriel Children's Center Newsletter was received.

The 40th Annual Peace Officers Memorial ceremony will be held on May 27, 2009 at the S.T.A.R. Center in Whittier.

FACILITY/GROUP HOME INSPECTION REPORTS FROM APRIL 8, 2009, TO APRIL 14, 2009

Industry Sheriff Station – Commissioners Bacio and Hall

The facility was visited on April 12, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Areas of Concern: Needs panic and emergency buttons.

Bourne Inc (Bourne) – 4, #4 – Commissioner Bigby

The facility was visited on April 10, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concerns: Needs to cleanup backyard, fix drainage problem, cut down shrubs; barbeque pit needs to be removed.

Children's Homes of Southern California (Baird) – 9, #3 – Commissioner Montaña

The facility was visited on April 13, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concerns: Need to update one Needs and Services Plan; one fire extinguisher needs recharging.

Dubnoff Center (Clybourn) – 16, #2 – Commissioner Bigby

The facility was visited on April 13, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concerns: Laundry needs to be done; more linen, towels and toiletries needed; needs new floor in bathroom; needs to replace towel holder and heater; needs to conduct monthly fire drills; needs life books; bedroom #1 needs new comforters; new carpet; new window blinds; bedroom #2 needs to replace the window blinds; closet door needs to be repaired; bedroom #3 needs new carpet; window blinds need to be replaced; closet door needs to be painted.

Aviva Center, Hamburger Home (Aviva Center) – 3, #5 – Commissioners Bacio, Hall and Moore

The facility was visited on April 14, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Area of Concern: Probation Officers are not available at all times.

Norwalk Sheriff Station – Commissioner Montaña

The facility was visited on April 14, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (To be presented and placed on a future agenda)

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Montaña adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m. in memory of Mr. Michael Cooper, Probation Department Representative.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Davis
Commission Services Division